the Ladder

OCTOBER • 50c

purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications—this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

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COVER BY DOMINO

EDITORIAL

ONLY THE BEGINNING

THE PAST YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF ATTACK ON MANY FRONTS. THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY AND THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS WERE VICIOUSLY ATTACKED IN THE SAN FRANCISCO MAYORALTY CAMPAIGN (SEE LADDER OF Nov. 1959). NEWSSTANDS HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO WIDESPREAD ATTACK THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY FOR CARRYING "SMUT," THE CENSORS BEING PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH POCKETBOOKS INCLUDING REFERENCES TO LESBIANS OR HOMOSEXUALITY. "GAY" BARS HAVE BEEN UNDER INCREASING ATTACK IN CALIFORNIA AND NEW YORK, THOUGH THE RIGHT OF THE HOMOSEXUAL TO MEET AND BE SERVED IN A PUBLIC BAR OR RESTAURANT HAS BEEN UPHELD IN THE COURTS. DOB HAS ALSO BEEN UNDER SURVEILLANCE, AS IT WERE. OUR LANDLORD WAS QUESTIONED BY THE POLICE, AND MEMBERS OF THE NEWLY FORMED "HOMOSEXUAL DETAIL" TOOK IN OUR FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION.

THE PICTURE IS NOT AS BLEAK AS IT MAY SEEM, HOWEVER. DOB HAS AND WILL MEET THE CHALLENGE - NOT WITH BELLIGERENCE OR COUNTER-ATTACK, BUT WITH INCREASED EFFORTS TO BRING UNDERSTANDING FOR AND ABOUT THE HOMOSEXUAL IN OUR COMMUNITY. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR WILLINGNESS TO MEET WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS THEY ENCOUNTER WITH THIS MINORITY GROUP. WE BELIEVE THAT A SERIES OF CONFERENCES THAT WOULD INCLUDE PERSONS FROM EVERY GROUP WHICH DEALS WITH THIS PROBLEM, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, COULD LEAD TO NEW UNDERSTANDING, NEW APPROACHES, NEW ATTITUDES - NEW SOLUTIONS.

AS THE LADDER BEGINS ITS 5TH YEAR OF PUBLISHING AND THE DOB STARTS ITS 6TH YEAR AS AN ORGANIZATION, WE REALIZE WE HAVE MADE ONLY A BARE BEGINNING. WE TAKE THIS TIME TO REINFORCE AND RE-DEDICATE OUR EFFORTS TOWARD UNDERSTANDING OF OURSELVES AND THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH WE LIVE SO THAT WE MAY LEARN HOW BEST TO SERVE THAT COMMUNITY WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING THE CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE CONSTRUCTIVE CREATIVITY OF THE HOMOSEXUAL.

- DEL MARTIN

Police Chief Replies

"YOUR LETTER DIRECTED TO MAYOR GEORGE CHRISTOPHER ENCLOSING THE COPY OF THE LADDER (AUGUST ISSUE) HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO MY ATTENTION FOR ANSWER.

"WE IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ARE WELL AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE LAW PROHIBITS A LIQUOR LICENSEE FROM CHOOSING HIS OWN CLIENTELE. WE ARE ALSO EQUALLY AWARE THAT LIQUOR LICENSEES HAVE IMPOSED UPON THEM BY LAW THE DUTY TO CONDUCT THEIR PREMISES IN AN ORDERLY MANNER. THE FACT THAT ONE'S CLIENTELE IS MAINLY COMPOSED OF HOMOSEXUALS DOES NOT ENTITLE SUCH LICENSEE TO ANY SPECIAL PRIVILEGES, NOR LESSEN THIS DUTY.

"TO DELIBERATELY, ILLOGICALLY, AND WRONGFULLY IMPLY THAT TAVERNS ARE POLICED SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY CATER TO HOMOSEXUALS IS TO BLANDLY IGNORE THE REAL BASIS FOR SUCH POLICE SURVEILLANCE; NAMELY, THAT MANY OF THESE PREMISES ARE NOT CONDUCTED IN AN ORDERLY MANNER, AND AS SUCH ARE INIMICAL TO THE PUBLIC WELFARE AND MORALS.

"ANY ASSISTANCE GIVEN BY YOU BY WAY OF IMPROVING SUCH CONDUCT IN THE PREMISES IN QUESTION WILL BE APPRECIATED BY ME."

THOMAS J. CAHILL, CHIEF OF POLICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

* * * * * * *

WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE CHIEF CAHILL'S TAKING TIME OUT TO REPLY TO OUR LETTER AND WISH HIM TO KNOW THAT IT IS NOT OUR INTENTION TO "HARASS" THE POLICE ON THIS QUESTION OF "GAY" BARS. WE DO NOT ASK FOR "LICENSE," NOR DO WE CONDONE INDECENT BEHAVIOR. WE DO ASK, HOWEVER, FOR A REALISTIC APPROACH TO THIS EVER-GROWING PROBLEM - THAT THE "GAY" BAR IS HERE TO STAY, THAT "HOUSE RULES" AND A MODICUM OF POLICE INSPECTION ARE IN ORDER AND THAT A LITTLE MORE UNDERSTANDING FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE IS NECESSARY TO EFFECT AN EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. "DECORUM" IS THE WORD THAT CAME OUT OF OUR CONVENTION DISCUSSION - PERHAPS TOGETHER WE CAN FIND AN ACCEPTABLE DEFINITION.

Behind the Borderline

I am very happy to see that my fable, "The House on the Borderland," has aroused so much awareness of one of the most painful problems in the homosexual world, the special plight of the married Lesbian. Jan Fraser has told the other side of the story, and I am also glad to see that there are those who do not consider us pure freaks, outlaws, or thrill-seekers (thrill-seekers, dear God! What we find is far from thrilling, believe me.).

I have ceased to ask myself why I am a Lesbian, but during the last few years I have tried unceasingly to understand why I am a married one. Those who understand me frequently ask, "Why did you marry?" How does a woman find herself in such an unholy predicament? For what it's worth, I think my case is almost painfully typical.

At the age of sixteen I was well aware that I had homosexual tendencies - more than this, having had no experience, I was not willing to admit it. I was (there can be no harm in saying it) an intelligent and analytical girl; I could hardly fail to be aware that I was uninterested in boys and that my passionate imagination dwelt not on Frank Sinatra or Clark Gable, but on Rosa Ponselle and Antoinette Concello. The depth of my emotion over a pretty redhead girl in one of my classes startled and shocked me; however, for my geographical location and my age, I had had what was regarded as an excellent sex instruction; that is, I had been given adequate instruction for my age limits and I was at least aware of the major deviations from the average norms. Being, as I say, of an analytical turn of mind, I tended to regard my homosexual tendencies as due mainly to a classically traumatic experience, rape, in my early teens, at the hands of a trusted male relative. I told myself that I had simply been scared witless.

In college I rationalized my avoidance of boys my own age by telling myself I was there to get an education, not to catch myself a husband. About that time I fell into the hands of a woman considerably older than I,

twice married, aware of her own tendencies, and, like me, unwilling to admit them. We grew very close and intimate - I am speaking of confidences rather than physical experiences. This woman, too, took the conventional view of my admitted tendencies; she was not shocked by the fact that I loved her, but attempted to persuade me that this was an adolescent phase which I would soon grow out of. She also gave me (she was a medical student) textbooks on psychology and anatomy, feeling sure that I was, as she said, sufficiently mature to talk myself out of my childish fears of men.

Largely at her insistence, I allowed myself to become intimate with a man. I had expected to feel shame and self-disgust; to my surprise I found the experience neither painful nor unpleasant; and if there was little romantic satisfaction - well, the best psychological advice seemed to regard romantic love as an adolescent and unrealistic dream, anyhow. I felt, to quote the words of the hero of Mary Renault's THE CHARIOTEER, "Once I found out that I could if I put my mind to it, I felt I might become naturalized, so to speak."

One could therefore say I was misled by the very best psychological advice and by "excellent" sex instruction on a college level. Homosexual tendencies, so these excellent authorities informed me, were simply a passing phase. And since I had discovered that I was quite capable of having and enjoying physical relations with a man - at that stage of development, physical relations with a woman were still a mystery to me - I regarded myself, Q. E. D., as cured of my adolescent propensities.

Naturally I married. In the part of Texas where I now live, teen-age marriages are common: marriages of girls fourteen and fifteen are not at all unusual, and the girl who delays marriage until her twenties is the exception rather than the rule. I was nineteen; my husband was more than twenty years my senior. I regarded this simply as an attempt to find a man who was intellectually my equal or superior; boys of my own age had no interests, I told myself, except in the football team.

My first child was born less than a year after my marriage. I found married life perfectly tolerable, preg-

nancy enjoyable, and having a baby of my own a joy I had never even dreamed about. Even that classical bugaboo which is supposed to create homosexuality, the fear of childbirth, did not appear in my case; my son was born without anesthetics at my own request.

Not until my son was past a year old and I was beginning to fret for another baby to replace my big boy did I begin to feel a vague unhappiness. To this day I feel that if I had been kept busy with a baby every ten months, my tendencies would never have returned. But that is idle speculation; obviously my inner emotions prevented me from marrying the sort of man who would keep me busy producing babies and living the life of a busy hausfrau.

All during this time I had been building myself a reasonably successful career as a writer of adventure stories. My agent noticed a persistent homosexual cast in all of my writings, and when I was in my middle twenties, he began the task of helping me to understand myself. First he sent me various of the better gay novels, and when I reacted to them as he expected - with interest which covered an almost desperate need for self-understanding - he introduced me to sex information on an adult level of the Kinsey variety. You must realize that my supposedly excellent and full sex instruction had been of the kind recommended by schools, churches, and the like; in short, it was of that conventional variety guaranteed not to offend even the strait-laced and bigoted, and therefore leaving everything but strictly conventional sex as a realm of chaotic outer darkness.

And here, I must say, lies the real tragedy. The books and manuals for adults only come far too late. The girl or the boy with homosexual tendencies needs information desperately at the age of fourteen, not when he or she is "over 21." By the age of 21, the girl is often married and the boy has made desperate and floundering experiments with women - and sometimes with men - which have confirmed a pattern leading me to agree sometimes with the remark that all homosexuals are neurotic. How could they be otherwise when they have no chance to grow up as they are? It is considered necessary now (and thank God for small mercies) to give a girl information

about her reproductive system before it springs some painful surprises on her, but knowledge of the darker pitfalls of sex is still reserved for those over 21 - by which time it is too late.

To return to myself. At first I insisted I had only a writer's interest, a strictly literary and psychological interest, in these deviations. Gradually I was forced to admit that my interest was personal; I had once had homosexual tendencies. That I still had them I resolutely refused to admit. I was a mature woman who had grown out of them. I was happily married; or, if not happily, at least the friction in my marriage arose out of the vast age difference between my husband and me and had nothing to do with my past childish aberrations.

My fool's paradise came to an abrupt end when a little girl of fifteen, one of my music pupils, with whom I had the most innocent friendship possible, suddenly married. (Marriages at fifteen, as I say, are common here.) I was outraged and furious, telling myself that this was merely righteous indignation at allowing a girl not yet out of high school to marry and be forced to take on the responsibilities of a home.

I gave the little thing a lovely wedding present, kissed the bride lovingly and the husband politely, promised to be godmother to her first child, and went home crying no harder than I usually did at weddings. The trouble was, I didn't stop. I cried incessantly and continuously for the next four months until my husband, thoroughly alarmed, sent me to the doctor for an overdue checkup. His well-meant ministrations were limited to a prescription for tranquilizers, a friendly pat on the arm, a suggestion that a marriage between a man in his late fifties and a woman in her middle twenties might well be frustrating (even he could realize that I was not happy), and another suggestion that I talk over what was bothering me with a priest or with a woman friend.

Since I was not sure what was bothering me, I sat down to try to figure it out and came up with the most terrifying answer possible, the answer which made it impossible to talk it over with priest or woman friend, and which collapsed my comfortable card-house into a litter

of celluloid around me: namely, I had been in love with the little girl, under the high-minded pretense of being a big sister and friend to the orphan.

If I were to detail all the things I called myself in the next few weeks, this publication would come under the intimate scrutiny of the postal authorities; "freak" was the least of them. One thing was certain: I could no longer hide my head in the sand and read my issues of THE LADDER as an interested but detached outsider.

I was still rationalizing. I told myself that my frustrating and imperfect marriage was at the bottom of my return to an adolescent manifestation (oh, Doctor Freud!). However, I still came smack up against unalterable fact: if my marriage was so frustrating, why hadn't I been doing something about it? Why had I not been casting longing looks at our handsome young grocery clerks and at the college boys who worked with my husband, rather than at my own music pupils, these little girls of fifteen and seventeen who were themselves at the threshold of marriage and motherhood? If my decadent tastes were dissatisfied with a good and sincere man, why wasn't I daydreaming about an elopement with Clark Gable, rather than listening dreamily to the voices of the sopranos over the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts?

A rigorous analysis of my own past has shown me that my emotional tendencies were well established long before the classical traumatic experience in my teens. I married under the impression that homosexual tendencies were an adolescent phase. I allowed myself to be persuaded into marriage by a random bit of data: the irrelevant fact that I enjoyed sex relations with men.

Perhaps circumstances might have allowed me to be blind forever. Being as I am, I prefer knowing the truth. Where I will go from the "house on the borderland," I do not know. It is certain that I am not seeking "forbidden thrills" in the "dark world." I know myself to be an outcast there. And I am, as I stated in the fable, bound by strong ties: a good and kind man, and a child just reaching the age where a father is most necessary. Wherever I go, I break at least one heart. But the house

on the borderland, I know now, is a halfway house, a terminal.

I didn't ask to be bisexual. I would much prefer, if the truth were told, to be one thing or the other; and at my present stage of the game I wouldn't much care which it was. My truest emotional level lies in the need I have - or seem to have - for other women. Yet I sometimes tell myself that if my present frustrating marriage ties were severed, if I were free to marry a man nearer my own age who could fill my life with routine needs and children, I might still be able to put homosexuality behind me forever.

Even as I say this, I know it is false. If I were, with one savage effort and with anguish never to be measured, to sever all my ties in the world of women, to resolve severely never again to be more than casually friendly with another woman - I should be either a hypocrite or a madwoman.

Our society will either force an irrevocable choice on me, or it will destroy me. Right now I neither know nor care which. I stand squarely at the crossroads, and the traffic is hell.

- Miriam Gardner

* * * * *

NEWS FROM FILM LAND ...

According to VARIETY (August 10, 1960), "Blood and Roses," acquired for release by Paramount, has been taken off the distribution schedule for the time being without explanation. There are grounds for belief that censorship consideration might be involved, since the film concerns itself in part with a Lesbian - which is contrary to MPAA Production Code rules anent sex perversion.

Also of interest is the note by Mike Connolly in the August 23, 1960 issue of THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, "George Cukor will produce and direct George Axelrod's 'Goodbye, Charlie' with Marilyn Monroe as the man reincarnated as a woman."

LESBIANA

BY GENE DAMON

THIS COLUMN IS A CONTINUOUS BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS ON THE LESBIAN THEME. THEY ARE NOT OFFERED FOR SALE IN THE DOB BOOK SERVICE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY NOTED AS SUCH.

149. YOUNG AND INNOCENT BY EDWIN WEST. MONARCH BOOKS, CONN.

DESPITE THE MISLEADING INFORMATION ON THE BLURB THIS IS A FIRST NOVEL BY A FEMININE AUTHOR. DISREGARDING THE USUAL FORMULA, "EDWIN WEST" HAS ATTEMPTED TO SHOW THE INNER WORKINGS OF A SUCCESSFUL LESBIAN MARRIAGE DISRUPTED BY A COMBINATION OF PETTY EVENTS AND THE SIMULTANEOUS APPEARANCE OF A DESIRABLE YOUNG GIRL. LAVINIA CARTWRIGHT AND SANDRA KEEL ARE BOTH FULLY ADULT, INTELLIGENT WOMEN AND THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES OF THEIR LIVES ARE THOROUGHLY EXAMINED AS THEY LIVE TOGETHER, AND SEPARATELY, THROUGH THE CRISIS OF LAVINIA'S BRIEF INTEREST IN ANOTHER WOMAN. AT THE PUBLISHER'S INSISTENCE SOME OF THIS NOVEL HAS POINTLESS ADDITIVES, BUT THE PRACTICED READER WILL HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN SEPARATING THE GOOD FROM THE BAD. COMMENDABLE FOR ITS UNUSUAL ASPECT OF THE LESBIAN RELATIONSHIP. ONE HOPES TO SEE MORE FROM THIS AUTHOR.

(THIS NEW BOOK IS AVAILABLE FROM DOB BOOK SERVICE, 35¢ PLUS 10¢ HANDLING.)

150. BAUDELAIRE, RIMBAUD, VERLAINE: SELECTED VERSE AND PROSE POEMS, EDITED BY JOSEPH M. BERNSTEIN. CITADEL, N. Y. 1947. -

A WONDERFUL ANTHOLOGY FOR THE LESBIANA COLLECTOR. THIS CONTAINS AN EXCELLENT TRANSLATION OF ALL THREE OF BAUDELAIRE'S LESBIAN POEMS: "DAMNED WOMEN - #1 AND 2," AND "LESBOS." ALSO IT OFFERS THE ONLY ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF VERLAINE'S OVERT LESBIAN POETRY: "ON THE BALCONY," "PER AMICA SILENTIA," "YOUNG GIRLS AT SCHOOL," AND "SAPPHO." WITH THE EXCEPTION OF RENEE VIVIEN, NO POET WROTE AS EXPLICIT LESBIAN POETRY AS DID VERLAINE.

MATTACHINE SOCIETY

On Changing Sex Laws

It's time for a change. This statement is not to be construed as a political slogan during this election year, but rather in relation to our outmoded sex laws. It is the general conclusion of the speakers at the 7th annual convention of the Mattachine Society held at the Bellevue Hotel in San Francisco over Labor Day weekend.

Featured speaker for the morning session was Joseph R. Silver, Executive Director for the Northern California Service League. The League's work consists of helping in the over-all rehabilitation of criminals, both during their incarceration and afterward.

Mr. Silver explained his organization's belief that arrest has many related effects. Rejection on the part of the community is one of the first. Another is the destruction of self-esteem and -confidence, which stems from the assumption of guilt when one is arrested. A third concomitant is that one who has been arrested often loses his job and/or has subsequent difficulties in securing and keeping employment. The Northern California Service League concerns itself with solving such problems as these for the violator of the law and for the parolee.

JAIL IS 'BREEDING-PLACE' FOR CRIME

An emphatic part of Mr. Silver's talk was his statement that jail is "a breeding-place for crime." Jail - or prison - deprives the violator of normal outlets in that there he has little or no chance to make decisions or to do serious thinking. He therefore can not grow as a person during that period. The difficulty is getting people to see clearly all the effects of arrest was well brought out by Karl Menninger's remark to the effect that it is hard for a free fish to understand a hooked one.

"The Northern California Service League," Mr. Silver stated, "is dedicated to the principle that people are

human beings. There must be mutual respect and honesty between the violator and the community."

LUNCHEON SPEAKER CITES '7' SEXES

Dr. Harry Benjamin, well-known endocrinologist and sexologist, brought much enlightenment and food for thought in his speech, "The Seven Sexes of Man." He stated that modern researchers have given to the study of sex more obscurity than light. The seven sexes, according to Dr. Benjamin, mean seven concepts of the word "sex" - seven ways of interpreting the term.

The fundamental, inherited sex can be analyzed by the chromosome determinants, familiarly known as the X and Y chromosomes.

From there it is possible to consider anatomical sex, which consists of all the primary and secondary sex characteristics together, making up the male or female being.

Third is the legal sex - the "nursery" sex determined for each new-born baby. This may not correspond to the genetic sex, for it is subject to change or alteration. The very fact that secondary (outward) sex characteristics can be changed is alone justification for legal change, said Dr. Benjamin, although such legal change is usually difficult to bring about.

Endocrinal sex for all is mixed; there is some of the male and some of the female in each person. We are all "intersexes," but take a masculine or feminine role chiefly from the primary sex characteristics.

Still another way of regarding sex is to consider the germinal make-up. The germinal sex determines whether one will contribute sperm or egg in the process of reproduction.

Dr. Benjamin spoke at length on the sixth concept, the psychological sex. Early conditioning, he explained, is important in creating a split-sex personality - a mind-body conflict. Psychological counseling is usually invalid in bringing into harmony one who has been reared

in an "opposite-sex" atmosphere. The great question, continued Dr. Benjamin, is why some people who were brought up in this way become thoroughly masculine or feminine despite the inconsistent background, and some do not. His conclusion was that there must be some congenital, inborn predisposition toward masculinity or femininity.

The end result of these six determinants is the social sex. By this Dr. Benjamin meant that for the "normal" man or woman there is no legal question of which sex is dominant. For the others who do not fit into this clear-cut pattern, there is often condemnation by the law and society. So long as all people can not conform to a specific social role, there must be either "priest-invented sin or artificially-created crime."

'LET'S CHANGE OUR OUTMODED SEX LAWS'

A star-studded, provocative panel, with Mrs. Molly Minudri, San Francisco attorney, acting as moderator, stressed the need to re-examine our outmoded sex laws during the afternoon session.

Mrs. Bernice Engle, research assistant of the Langley Porter Psychiatric Clinic of the University of California School of Medicine, spoke of the recent vote of the English Parliament on whether to confirm the Wolfenden Report and make homosexual acts between consenting adults legal, or at least not criminal in nature. The vote was approximately 2 to 1 against the resolution. After the issue was decided in Parliament, the newspapers and magazines throughout England made much of the point. The opinion in general was that more time was needed, as were research and public education, and that it must be determined once and for all whether homosexuality is a sin or a crime.

"One of my chief concerns is with individuals' or groups' pushing others around," Dr. Joseph Andriola, psychoanalyst from Atascadero State Hospital, declared.

The Puritan behavior of some people deprives others of a livelihood, he said, and this is an "evil thing." On the other hand, flaunting one's homosexuality cannot help the conflict at all. Homosexuals ought not to be discrimi-

nated against; yet they must learn to cooperate with the whole of society.

LACK OF INFORMATION BIGGEST STUMBLING BLOCK

A. Phillip Burton, attorney and California assemblyman, stated, "The biggest stumbling block in society's solving the problem of sex laws is lack of information."

Public discussion and debate are valuable in breaking down the barriers, he pointed out. Enough of such activity may eventually result in something comparable to the Wolfenden Report - a commission perhaps to study the problem in the legislature.

Dr. David W. Allen, professor of psychiatry at the University of California School of Medicine, said that as a physician he was not only concerned with furthering of the Wolfenden Report, but also with the problem of misconceptions about homosexuality. The homosexual's idea of the problem between himself and society is an illusory thing, for much of the problem lies within the individual.

"I don't think that changes in the law will solve the entire problem," he stated.

LEGISLATURE GOVERNED BY 'PEOPLE BACK HOME'

John A. O'Connell, attorney and California assemblyman, pointed up the difficulties encountered by the state legislature in enacting more reasonable and equitable sex laws.

"The people back home have a Puritanical attitude toward sex," he said. "We have the problem of overcoming this opposition. We can't expect drastic changes without considerable support from the community as a whole."

"It is one thing to say something should be done; it is quite another to translate this into votes."

Mr. Burton pointed out that "the penal code grew like Topsy." There are no well conceived or well defined standards. The legislature is literally dependent upon

a given situation arousing enough public opinion to warrant tightening up of existing laws.

TOTAL REVIEW OF SEX LAWS NEEDED

"We need a total review of our sex laws," he stated, "with punishment in relation to the offense."

"Punishment as a deterrent to crime has been a failure since the beginning of time," Dr. Allen said. The matter of guilt and punishment go hand in hand, and punishment very often adds to crime. Punishment must be as instantaneous as burning your finger by fire or it will not work.

SODOMY LAWS DISCUSSED

Mrs. Minudri pointed out that sodomy is a felony in some states and a misdemeanor in others and that the penalty imposed was also variable.

Dr. Andriola expressed his opposition to sodomy laws as extremely unreasonable. "I only went to college for 8 years, and I still can't understand the language of the law. What is this 'infamous crime against nature'?"

Mrs. Engle considered sodomy as neither natural or unnatural and suggested it be permitted between heterosexuals as well as homosexuals. As a means of making legal "so-called deviate acts" between consenting adults she hoped that a state congress similar to the Wolfenden Committee could be formed and that proposals of the Model Penal Code of the American Law Institute be considered.

HETEROSEXUAL 'DEVIATION' POINTED OUT

"We would have just as much difficulty in getting votes for permissiveness for heterosexuals as homosexuals. We prefer to deal with a total program. Half-way measures are not feasible," Mr. Burton said.

Mrs. Engle countered, "But if we take up the question of deviations in a heterosexual relationship first, wouldn't

this tend to ease the shock in the homosexual situation?"

While such a basis for discussion might be more palatable to the legislature, it must be remembered, Mr. O'Connell pointed out, that legislators are not in a position to be "for sin and against God and country." We must have a broad based community support to make it easy for the legislature to vote. The legislators are ahead of public opinion, and yet public opinion must be brought to bear upon the legislature.

Mr. Burton concurred. "Leadership in the intellectual community will ease the pressure on legislators."

- Elaine Kingston

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CORRIGENDA FOR
"SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE HOMOSEXUALS"
THE LADDER, SEPTEMBER 1960

(New or changed language is underlined.)

P. 6, 2nd paragraph, end of third line should read: "But 78% of those of each group who attended college"

P. 9, 2nd paragraph, 5th line should read: "well-educated male homosexuals"

P. 11, 3rd paragraph, following heading "III. Family History" should read: "Family background of the men's group seems somewhat more stable than that of the women: As Figure III shows, 72% of the men were reared by both parents, compared to only 65% of the women."

P. 16, 2nd paragraph, 1st sentence should read: "Friends of the men are reported to be mostly homosexual in about 1/3 of the replies, mostly heterosexual in 16% of them, and evenly mixed in 50%."

P. 18, 1st paragraph, next to last sentence should begin: "Furthermore, some of the 46% of men ..."

READERS RESPOND

"I would like to comment on Florence Conrad's article, 'In Defense of "Defense"', in the August issue of THE LADDER. My remark during the convention forum on 'Why the Lesbian?' concerning the need to forego self-justification before society was made to a specific question that was asked. I was unable to amplify the point at that time, as I would like to have done, because I was aware that, taken literally, the counsel might be seen as antagonistic to the aims and purposes of the Daughters of Bilitis. This was far from my intention at that time.

"If I could have explained my point further, I doubt if I would have been able to do so as thoroughly and as satisfyingly as Florence Conrad did in her excellent article. There is that which needs defending, and there is that which does not need defense. Creative effort can come only when one is able to distinguish between the two. I am grateful to Miss Conrad for her able clarification of this point, and I hope that your readers will reflect deeply on her words."

LEO J. ZEFF, Ph.D.
Berkeley, California

* * * * *

T H A N K Y O U, M I S S A L D R I C H

Your slap at THE LADDER has boomeranged! Aside from the mail you yourself have received and graciously forwarded, letters and subscriptions have been pouring into the DOB office. One letter addressed simply to "Daughters of Bilitis, San Francisco, California" reached us. Another queried the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce for our address. Following are a few of the letters received re the Great Debate (Ann Aldrich vs. THE LADDER):

"As it was pointed out, Ann Aldrich is controversial,

but if it hadn't been for her remarks in CAROL concerning your organization and THE LADDER, I wouldn't have known you existed. I have a fair enough mind to reserve opinions of anything and anyone, so Ann's criticisms didn't make too much impression.

"Mostly I'm just writing this to say DOB makes life a little brighter for one surrounded by heteros. After two marriages and two children, I'm finally waking up to the facts - unfortunately, too late.

"So thanks, Ann, anyway. You did me a service, for DOB and its book service make life a little easier and I don't feel so lonely."

A. B., California

* * * * *

"Whee! Let's all get into the brawl! Such a belligerent LADDER this time.

"For Heaven's sake, how can anyone say that the Anns Aldrich and Bannon are the same? Miss Bannon writes a good story in an excellent style and a sympathetic manner; Miss Aldrich is a poor writer with a big, fat chip on her shoulder. Ann Bannon is our friend; Ann Aldrich certainly is not.

"Unless this is a case of a very split-up Dr. Jekyll and Mrs. Hide, I don't see how they could possibly be the same. For shame, Jeannette Foster, to say such things about Ann Bannon!

"I'll bet the reason A. A. tore 1958 to pieces was that after that, there wasn't anything poor enough to bother with. Everyone says THE LADDER's getting better. Guess it must be true."

J. L., California

* * * * *

"After writing to the Daughters of Bilitis for more information regarding your group and asking how I might

help, I received the August issue of THE LADDER. I found it very interesting and enjoyed your editorial on Mayor Christopher. I have great hopes for your crusade because this is the age of struggle for the rights of all mankind - and the minorities are proving not so minor, after all!

Ann Aldrich Indicts DOB and THE LADDER!!

READ THE COMPLETE STORY

Which all began a long time ago with THE LADDER's "Open Letter to Ann Aldrich" published in April, 1958.

With the June, 1960 edition of CAROL IN A THOUSAND CITIES (Gold Medal Book, Fawcett Publications, Inc., Greenwich, Conn.), Miss Aldrich has finally made her reply. She takes THE LADDER apart "rung by rung" or issue by issue during 1958.

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OPEN LETTER TO ANN ALDRICH (April, 1958 issue of THE LADDER) - 50 cents

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"I thought there was much too much ado over Ann Aldrich-Bannon. She's proof that automation has reached the literary (?) field. I don't believe she exists at all but is really a creation by I. B. M."

C. L. California

* * * * *

"Just finished chuckling over your August 'Ann Aldrich' issue. After reading Miss A's first two books I gave up wondering whose side she was on; and after her latest I congratulate you on your remarkable restraint. For myself, all I can say is, it's a good thing people aren't mind readers! Dr. Foster's theory on the lady's split personality is most interesting. If Annie would stop judging all Lesbians by herself, she'd be pleasantly surprised.

"I hadn't yet discovered DOB in 1958, but have been reading THE LADDER since June, 1959, and I'm afraid our orphan just landed on the wrong planet. Of course, I didn't like every article, but didn't expect to. If everyone had the same tastes, this would be a pretty monotonous world.

"Your pro and con stories on the married Lesbian are quite good, and I hope you continue them. While I have never run into this situation, I do have very definite ideas about it; have always believed you can't have your cake and eat it, too. Am now beginning to think I have been guilty of unfairness, hence the request for more sides to the picture."

M. J. H., Illinois

* * * * *

"Have just finished reading CAROL IN A THOUSAND CITIES. Let us remember that the author writes for cold cash, no cause.

"I believe Mr. (?) Ann Aldrich-Vin Packer would like to be considered foremost in the field of Lesbian literature - and is fast losing out.

"After Lesbians read CAROL I'm sure Aldrich will feel in the position of the person who gave birth to the old Islamic saying, quote: 'There go my people. I must hurry after them, for I am their leader!'"

ANN CARLL REID (Former Editor of ONE Magazine, California

* * * * *

"Have just read CAROL IN A THOUSAND CITIES and can't help but wonder why the writer labored so to climb THE LADDER - and so painstakingly!

"It seems to me it's common knowledge the stuff shown in your little vehicle isn't of the finest quality and that to criticize it so wantonly would not only put emphasis on its mediocrity (of which I feel certain you gals on THE LADDER would be the first to agree), but it emphasizes also the mediocrity of the critic who bothered to scan it - and so, so meticulously!

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"It looks to this reader as though the author calculated to use the little anthology as propaganda, the insertions of which were neither offensive nor objectionable in tone. To this I have no beef. Yes, the collection was, in my opinion, quite good.

"But the slobbering might well have been supplanted by the kind of story the writer claims is not now appearing in your little format. Don't you think so?"

V. B. California

* * * * *

"I am truly surprised - and a bit disappointed - that you allowed Jeannette Foster's 'Ann of 10,000 Words Plus' to be printed within the pages of THE LADDER. I read Miss Aldrich's criticism of THE LADDER, and I found it extremely amusing and entertaining - and a little ridiculous. I expected to find in THE LADDER's response to Miss Aldrich's 'expose' a logical, factual rebuttal of her statements, and Del Martin did this very satisfactorily.

"However, the status of THE LADDER as a respectable magazine dropped several points with the publishing of Miss Foster's disgusting bit of name-calling, mud-slinging propaganda. What do you think you will achieve by carrying on a 'You're-More-Ridiculous-Than-I-Am' campaign? Are you trying to win a battle of sarcasm with Ann Aldrich, or are you trying to gain respectability and acceptance for your magazine and ultimately for the Lesbian?"

M. S., California

* * * * *

"I've been wondering why my friendly little subscription note was never acknowledged. Your August issue arrived today and answered the question. Ladies all, I beg your pardon: I am not <u>now</u>, <u>never have been</u>, and have no intention of <u>becoming</u>, Ann Aldrich-Vin Packer. I am just plain Ann Bannon - no relation, no connection; just the same publisher. Honest to God, Dr. Foster. I have two

small daughters, a charming husband, and, as you will note from the postmark on this envelope, live far from New York City, which town Miss Aldrich-Packer knows and reports on far better than I.

"I had a brief acquaintance with Miss Aldrich several years ago at the start of my writing career, in which she very kindly encouraged me. Perhaps my earlier books reflect her influence; that's something I'm not qualified to judge. At any rate, Miss Aldrich is a very capable writer and an intelligent girl.

"But I have not seen or corresponded with her for a considerable length of time to date, and her views and mine with respect to THE LADDER are entirely opposed. I'm all for you, believe it or not, for what you are trying to accomplish, and for the dignity and sincerity of your effort. And, may I please add, I did not even know you existed until early this year when some of my readers took the trouble to tell me about you. I not only didn't write those disparaging remarks in CAROL IN A THOUSAND CITIES, Miss Aldrich's new book, which satirize the 1958 issues of THE LADDER; I couldn't have. The first issue I ever saw was dated June, 1960.

"Believe me, I don't know whether to laugh or cry about this mix-up, and no doubt Miss Aldrich doesn't either. She is probably as dismayed as I to find that some, at least, consider our fiction indistinguishable. While I have respect for her talent and achievement, she would agree with me that the two of us could hardly be more different, both temperamentally and in our attitudes toward Lesbians and Lesbianism.

"I can't speak for Miss Aldrich, but most of my own 'scaring' adventures take place between my ears. I'm sorry my writing strikes so eminent a student and author as Dr. Foster as slick and dysenteric. If she's right, incidentally, my piggy bank should be a hell of a lot fuller than it is. I have never been psychoanalyzed, either subjectively or objectively.

"My stories are not meant as 'messages' for a waiting world. I live in a stucco house, and undress in front of my typewriter. It knows me so well by this time, it couldn't care less.

"All those WOMEN in the titles of my books were put there by market-minded editors. I don't object to the harem - natch - but I might point out to Dr. Foster that my own titles, with one exception, were far more circumspect, and completely sexless. Ergo, uncommercial. And they were junked in favor of the flavorsome ones you're familiar with.

"I have never judged or defiled anybody, to my knowledge, of any sex, or none whatsoever; and I wish to disassociate myself completely from Miss Aldrich's personal opinions vis-a-vis THE LADDER, DOB, and homosexuals in general. In fact, I have often recommended THE LADDER to some of the frustrated and/or lonely and curious people who take the trouble to write me - and there are a good many.

"In closing, may I thank you for offering my four novels for sale to your readers through the DOB Book Service. I hope they will not act as laxatives on the stout souls who peruse them - and will bring you much profit and pleasure."

ANN BANNON, California

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